

Ellen M. Whitten
14620 W. Lake Goodwin Rd.
Stanwood, WA. 98292-7794

January 21, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft
US Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

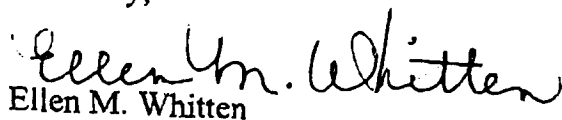
Now that there is an opportunity for a settlement of the government's lawsuit with Microsoft, I would like to suggest that this deal be finalized at the end of the month. Though some of the claims in the suit have some merit, as a whole this legal action appears to be a "sour grapes" attempt by companies that lost business they expected, and it has absorbed more energy than ever warranted. Any further litigation would be excessive.

An obvious problem with the lawsuit is how a company can have so much competition and still be a monopoly. There are plenty of alternatives to Microsoft products. However, as a member of the technology industry, my view is that Microsoft's dominance has a simple explanation: they develop superior software.

Considering how most companies operate, Microsoft's offer to eliminate preferential treatment of computer makers who use or promote their products is among several major concessions in the agreement. On top of that, forcing Microsoft to allow its competitors to review their internal code is a very invasive rule that at least straddles and probably crosses the line of government interference in the free marketplace.

With the involvement of an impartial technical committee to review compliance, there is no need to press for further disruption of Microsoft's business. Let's move on and allow this company to grow without further headaches from government. Thank you.

Sincerely,


Ellen M. Whitten